

# City of Eugene Human Rights Commission



*The mission of the Human Rights Commission is to promote implementation of universal human rights values and principles in all City of Eugene programs and throughout the wider community.*

*To carry out this mission the commission shall affirm, encourage and initiate programs and services within the City of Eugene and in the wider community designed to place priority upon protecting, respecting, and fulfilling the full range of universal human rights as enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To support and promote human rights, the commission will: provide human rights education, be proactive in human rights efforts, address human rights violations, ensure active public participation, be transparent and open, and be publicly accountable for human rights progress.*

**Human Rights Commissioners:** Andrew Thomson Chair, Chris Nunes Vice Chair, Richie Weinman, Ken Neubeck, David Van Der Hagen, Edward Goehring, Philip Carrasco, Mary Clayton, Arun Toke, Debra Merskin, Greg Evans

**Equity and Human Rights Office staff:** Michael Kinnison, Lorna Flormoe

*The Human Rights Commission typically meets on the third Tuesday of each month.*

**Tuesday, June 17, 2014**

5:30 – 7:30 PM Meeting

Atrium Building, Sloat Room, 99 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene

Contact: Lorna Flormoe, (541) 682-5670, [lorna.r.flormoe@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:lorna.r.flormoe@ci.eugene.or.us)

## **ITEM**

## **TIME ON TASK**

- |   |      |                     |
|---|------|---------------------|
| 1. Welcome from Chair, Agenda/Minutes Review  | VOTE | 5:30-5:35pm (5min)  |
| 2. Public Comment   |      | 5:35-5:45pm (10min) |
| 3. Support Requests<br>Pride; BEST; Columbia Law School HR Institute  |      | 5:45-5:55pm (10min) |
| 4. Councilor Greg Evans Liaison Report  |      | 5:55-6:05pm (10min) |
| 5. Work Planning Process brainstorm   |      | 6:05-6:35pm (30min) |
| 6. Staff Update (Environmental Justice Focus Group 6/19 2-4pm;<br>MUPTE; DT Zone; HRC appointments; Paid Sick Leave)        |      | 6:35-6:50pm (15min) |
| 7. Downtown Activity Zone Discussion  |      | 6:50-7:10pm (20min) |
| 8. Open Discussion (Homelessness Workgroup; MUPTE; upcoming<br>agenda prioritization; liaison reports; other announcements) |      | 7:10-7:30pm (20min) |

Upcoming Events, activities or meetings the HRC needs to be aware of:

- Annual PRIDE Festival, August 9<sup>th</sup>, Alton Baker Park

*The Eugene Human Rights Commission welcomes your interest in these agenda items. This meeting location is wheelchair accessible. For the hearing impaired, FM-assistive listening devices are available or an interpreter can be provided with 48 hours' notice prior to the meeting. Spanish-language interpretation will also be provided with 48 hours' notice. To arrange for these services, contact staff at (541) 682-5177.*

*La Comisión de Derechos Humanos agradece su interés por participar en los asuntos de esta agenda. El local de la reunión tiene acceso para personas en silla de ruedas. Para las personas con dificultades auditivas ofrecemos sistemas FM para ayudarlo a escuchar, o intérpretes de lenguaje de señas. También ofrecemos intérpretes de español. Si necesita cualquiera de estos servicios por favor solicítelos con 48 horas de anticipación, llamando al (541) 682-5177.*

## MINUTES

Eugene Human Rights Commission  
Equity and Human Rights Office – 99 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Eugene, Oregon

May 20, 2014  
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Andrew Thomson, Ken Neubeck, Philip Carrasco, Chris Nunes, Arun Toke, Richie Weinman, commissioners; Greg Evans, City Council Liaison; Lorna Flormoe, Michael Kinnison, staff

ABSENT: David Van Der Haughen, Debra Merskin, Mary Clayton, Edward Goehring

*The mission of the Human Rights Commission is to promote implementation of human rights values and principles in all City of Eugene programs and throughout the wider community.*

*To carry out this mission the commission shall affirm, encourage, and initiate programs and services within the City of Eugene and the wider community designed to place priority upon protecting, respecting, and fulfilling the full range of universal human rights as enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To support and promote human rights, the commission will: provide human rights education, be proactive in human rights efforts, address human rights violations, ensure active public participation, be transparent and open, and be publicly accountable for human rights progress.*

1. **Welcome from Chair/Agenda Review and Adjustment** – Commenced at 5:30 pm

Andrew moved to amend agenda, seconded by Ken seconded, unanimously approved.

Ken moved to approve the minutes as submitted, Chris seconded, unanimously approved.

2. **Public Comment**

Nobody present

3. **Support Requests**

Richie moved to approve Nightingale Sanctuary event request for \$200, seconded by Ken, approved unanimously. Ken volunteered to table for some of the event. Andrew may be able to attend as well.

4. **Council Liaison Report**

Councilor Evans - Whoville and Homelessness – we need to be more inclusive with our other governmental partners in establishing sustainable solutions to the problem. This means a viable shelter. Council not inclined to establish more rest stops. Further conversations will be had with Human Services Commission. We need to invest now in a shelter that is a public solution. This would need all stakeholders to be on board. City does not have the resources.

University of Oregon – Sexual assault issue has been dealt with primarily by EPD. There are concerns about protocols not being followed. These issues impact everyone; it is not just a UO issue. It is unclear if there is a role for the HRC.

Willamette Street current topic.

The Paid Sick Leave policy discussion is coming back to Council. A committee has been formed to discuss what a proposed ordinance could look like. Many people in the business community are concerned and not supportive. There is lots of work to be done to reconcile the two sides.

Ken – Decriminalization of homeless is not being addressed and it is hard to be heard on the issue. It is stressful to homeless folks who are fined and can't pay and are being moved from place to place, etc. There was a time that police would leave people alone unless there was a complaint received. He supports a shelter but we can't wait until a shelter is constructed to address this problem.

Councilor Evans – There is lots of fear about homeless and establishing temporary places for homeless. The push back is strong from community.

Arun – What about Civic stadium as a site for homeless to stay while it is being sold?

Councilor Evans – Some in community expressed vehement opposition to that.

Richie – School District 4J District would not support.

**5. Kaitlin Grigsby and Rob Zako, Exec. Director, Better Eugene and Springfield Transit**

Better Eugene and Springfield Transit (BEST) is working on promoting a regional triple bottom-line transportation system. BEST was formed in response to the West Eugene EmX process and interest in supporting bus rapid transit. Susan Ban, Terry McDonald, Laurie Trieger, Carmen Urbina have all been involved on the Board of Advisors. Social equity is important to the group. The group also wants to be proactive to EmX opposition for future routes. BEST is also interested in how to fund transit operations in the future. They are out speaking to different groups with social equity as part of their agenda. How is transit important to HRC and stakeholders you represent?

Richie - The people that need transit use it, for example, the poor, disabled, elderly, etc. He is concerned about social equity for them. Having a good transit system is critical; for the rest of us it is a convenience. The HRC has discussed transit in context of EmX expansion.

Ken - Concerned about equitable access to social services and government services. It is a human rights issue. Good transit is important for helping us become a Human Rights City.

Philip – Good transit can reduce transportation expenses, improve health and increase mobility.

Ken – All three aspects of TBL have human rights ties. For example, having access to jobs helps economic prosperity. Getting cars off street and reducing pollution helps achieve the human right to health.

Councilor Evans – Transit dependence is key to addressing issues of poverty. Transit service has been reduced in recent years. Operational funds are going to be a future problem for our transit system. Need to have good transit and access to jobs for working poor. Need to expand the system as much as possible. This is important for helping close prosperity gaps in our community.

Arun – We should support a system like BART. We don't have frequent enough service in many parts of town. Need to increase frequency of routes in areas planned for EmX to increase community support.

Philip – Have you been coordinating with LTD? LTD route map leaves some areas of Bethel unserved.

Rob – We have heard similar concerns about people in poverty from other groups. Not enough transit passes made available. Routes not frequent enough for important services. Lack of service early morning or late at night or on weekends impacts access to work. Message we're getting is that our existing service is pretty good but it is not meeting our need. We'll be providing a report to community (will send draft to HRC) about what we've heard. Solutions lie partly with money but partly with political will.

## **6. Steve McIntire, Chair, Civilian Review Board (CRB)**

He discussed role of CRB. They meet 10-12 times per year and often deal with issues that HRC does, for example homelessness. The CRB oversees the role of the Police Auditor. They reviews closed cases received from complainant or recommended from Auditor and consider policy changes to improve police function. They are seeing an increase in cases reported by police officers. Reviews how cases were investigated and monitored by police. Encourage police to use audio and video.

CRB includes a member of the Police Commission to make policy recommendations. Police are improving their operations although room for improvement remains. Auditor produces a newsletter update that identifies status of cases and is a good way for HRC to monitor and/or stay informed. The latest annual report can be shared. They would be interested in formalizing a process where the CRB reviews at least one case a year at the request of the HRC. Would also like for HRC to come to CRB to discuss the Commission's workplan and current priorities.

Ken – What information would HRC have access to for a case?

Steve – could provide enough for you to tell if it is a human rights issue but there are confidentiality issues.

Ken – it might be helpful to have a member of the CRB present when a case is discussed at the HRC.

Steve – will take that back for further discussion.

## **7. Work Planning Logistics – Staff proposal for process**

Consider doing preplanning in June with a couple of representatives from HRC. This group would make some recommendations on a process including times to meet in July. Staff is to find time on Council agenda in September. Andrew, Philip and Richie volunteered to work with staff on a recommended process and bring back to the HRC in June.

## **8. Debrief of Quarterly meetings with Mayor and City Manager**

Homelessness - Housing First model is being looked at and there is interest in collaborating with other stakeholders/governments on shelter option. Rest stops are not a priority for Council now.

MUPTE – Concerns were expressed about labor exploitation. Discussed importance of educating Council about the issue and actual stories of people impacted. It would be important to be clear and focused on any policy recommendations. City has limited capacity to police the issue. Councilor Evans – Council has some awareness of the labor issue. Problem with Capstone was that we had no rigor in the process. A stronger process is needed to build in community benefits and accountability. Council is discussing this now. Richie – Cannot go back and change rules on those currently awarded. Original goal was to create compact urban growth and combat urban sprawl. Not necessarily meeting other community goals. There is support from HRC around adding something that deals with labor violations and should be grounds for losing one's tax exemption.

Envision Eugene – Encouraged to track process and provide input where can.

## **9. Staff Update**

Updates on office changes and NUSA were given. Philip – there is a need to reach out to Latino community to clarify impacts with elimination of the vacant Public Service Officer position. Staff will follow up with Philip to identify stakeholders to connect with.

## **10. Open Discussion –**

Andrew – Submitted a letter to Mayor and Council and City Manager requesting a temporary moratorium on enforcing the ban on camping. He believed the action was consistent with bylaws. It was an urgent request from the Homeless Workgroup so decided to act. It was consistent with our support for decriminalization of homelessness. Apologize if some felt this was an overstep of authority and would like to discuss.

Ken – Bylaws give a certain degree of leeway in communicating with Council. Would be helpful to inform body what you are doing and why to give some context on your action.

Councilor Evans – Consider addressing this type of issue during work planning as a bylaws revision. It definitely should be clarified.

Ken – There are some issues that are so fundamentally human rights issues that it is imperative for the HRC to advocate around them. Don't believe we need to stifle our voice on important issues out of respect of the Council. Councilor Evans – That is not an issue for the HRC. The Commission has always operated respectfully. However, some in the advocate community have dealt with Council in a way that has alienated councilors and undermined support for the issue. Personal attacks are not helpful.

Richie – Suggested to Councilor Evans that Council recommend that the HRC have some input into the Poverty and Homelessness Commission. Councilor Evans agreed this would be good and to bring this up with Council.

Philip – Asked for clarification of membership on the committee investigating the Paid Sick Leave ordinance. He was referred to a list in this month's packet. Councilor Evans identified affiliations. Work sessions are scheduled for June with action sometime late in July. Staff will follow up on how HRC can have a voice in the process.

Philip – Difficult to have people feel comfortable telling their story about how they were treated on a MUPTE project. If folks are undocumented they have real fears about repercussions of coming forward. He does not support the City Manager appointing a review panel; it should be an independent body. Need an independent review of proposals and during the life of the exemption.

Integration Network was very positive. Education, health, law enforcement, and even MUPTE were discussed.

DRAFT



## City of Eugene



Human Rights Commission  
99 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 116  
Eugene, OR 97401-2793  
(541) 682-5177 (Voice)  
(541) 682-5221 (Fax)  
[www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov)  
[ehrcenter@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:ehrcenter@ci.eugene.or.us)

### FUNDS REQUEST FORM

#### EUGENE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Any person or organization requesting Human Rights Commission funding must complete and sign this form. Please review the guidelines for community requests before filling out this application.

The City of Eugene allocates a small amount of money each fiscal year to the Human Rights Commission to consider for community event funding requests. The Human Rights Commission receives numerous requests each year for funding, but cannot fund them all due to budget limitations. This commission strives to carefully consider which events to support with funding.

You or a representative from your agency is **strongly encouraged** to give a 3-minute overview of this request (during public comment period) promptly at 5:30 p.m. at this month's Human Rights Commission meeting and be available to answer questions. Please be as thorough as possible when filling out the form.

**Please note that if funding is approved, the commission requires a follow-up report within one month of use. Recipients may submit a written report or may attend the next commission meeting to present a brief verbal report.**

Date of Funding Request: June 9th, 2014

Date Funding Required: August 9th, 2014

Name/Date of Event: Eugene/Springfield Pride Festival - August 9th, 2014

Location of Event: Alton-Baker Park

Brief description of Event: Annual Pride festival, open to public

### NOTE: Time Line for Application

Applications must be received no later than the first Monday of the month **prior** to the event.

Organizations and/or individuals submit completed Application for Funds to:

Human Rights Program

99 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 116

Eugene, OR 97401

Fax: (541) 682-05221

[ehrcenter@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:ehrcenter@ci.eugene.or.us) **(Electronic submission instructions are at the bottom of this application)**

#### The Human Rights Commission Mission Statement:

**The City of Eugene values the dignity of all human beings. We are committed to:**

- Ensuring that human rights are a central part of every City program;
- Respecting and reflecting cultural and individual diversity;
- Fostering mutual understanding; and
- Promoting inclusiveness, justice and equity.

**Note:** Please choose only **one** funding option: Funding or Co-Sponsorship or other amount.

**We are requesting:**

☐ **Endorsement:** The commission may endorse events that meet the guidelines. The purpose of these events must be aligned with the commission's mission and goals. The commission may endorse specific events whose values it supports but to which it does not contribute money. The commission's name may be used in advertising for these events. This application for endorsement must be submitted to the commission and authorization must be granted prior to use of its name.

☐ **Funding:** The commission may provide up to \$100 for events that meet the guidelines if commissioners are not actively involved. The purpose of these events must be aligned with the commission's mission and goals.

**OR**

☒ **Co-Sponsorship:** The commission typically provides up to \$200 (higher amounts may be considered for specific circumstances) for events meeting the guidelines and in which commissioners will be actively involved. Active involvement means that, at a minimum, the group planning the event works directly with a commissioner who serves as a formal liaison between the group and the commission and reports back to the commission regularly. If possible, a commissioner should participate in the planning process and the commission should have an information table at the event.

**OR**

☐ **Other Amount Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please provide detailed information about why request exceeds standard funding levels:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of person/organization presenting request for funds** Eugene Pride Committee

**Address of person/organization presenting request for funds** \_\_\_\_\_

P.O. Box 1321 Eugene OR 97440

**Primary contact person's name and phone number** Dave McCallum, 541-505-1868

**Description of organization, names of officers and/or board of directors**

Eugene PRIDE Equity Project is a 501c3

Dave McCallum, President

-  
Vacancy, Vice-President

Tim Matteson, Treasurer

**What product or service is the City purchasing with these funds?**

Tables for event

**How would this expenditure directly further the adopted work plan of the commission?**

This is annual event celebrating the LGBTQ community in Eugene and Springfield

**Specifically, how would the City organization benefit by spending this money?**

Increasing the city's involvement in this event, would cement their commitment to  
providing an accepting and affirming environment for LGBTQ residents

**Detailed budget description for funds requested (attach if necessary)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Other co-sponsors or funding sources and amounts received**

Lithia Motors (500)

Is the event wheelchair accessible?..... Y ☒ N ☐

Will sign interpretation be available?..... Y ☐ N ☐

Will other language interpretation be available? (if requested)..... Y ☒ N ☐

Is the event's purpose to raise funds?..... Y ☐ N ☒

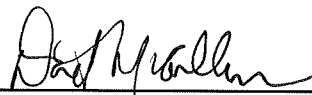
If funding request is approved, in what name should the check be issued and where should it be sent? First Name Dave Last Name McCallum

Street/Mailing Address: PO Box 1321

City Eugene State OR Zip Code 97440

**Note: If this funding request is approved by the City of Eugene Human Rights Commission, the funds will be used to purchase the service or product described in this application and a written or verbal report will be provided to the commission within 30 days.**

**Signature of person responsible for expenditure** \_\_\_\_\_



(For those without an electronic signature, by checking the box at the end of the signature line, you confirm and agree that the check mark you place in that box IS your signature.)

**Electronic Form Submission Instructions:** Fill out the form, save the electronic file and attach it to an e-mail to [EHRCenter@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:EHRCenter@ci.eugene.or.us). Please type "HRC Funding Request" in the Subject Field of the e-mail. Forms can also be mailed back to our office via USPS (address is listed above.)

Dear Fellow Human Rights Commissioners,

I am a member of the national Human Rights at Home Campaign, which seeks to build human rights principles into the way government at all levels operates. The Campaign is calling for improved human rights implementation and monitoring through increased coordination between federal, state and local actors, and federal resource support for state and local government efforts to promote and protect human rights. To ensure meaningful human rights implementation, the Campaign is also calling for new federal human rights mechanisms to facilitate this coordination.

As part of this effort, the Campaign's State and Local Subcommittee, on which I serve, has drafted a letter to Tom Malinowski, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, calling on the federal government to

- include "state and local agencies and officials in all future treaty reviews, including the upcoming reviews of compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and the Convention Against Torture, as well as the Universal Periodic Review process."
- "widely disseminate treaty body recommendations, communicate how they relate to state and local policy, and provide guidance on practices that can address areas of concern"; and
- provide "dedicated staff, education, training, and funding to help state, county and municipal governments fully comprehend and engage with the United States' human rights obligations"

Attached is brief information on treaties the U.S. has ratified and the Universal Periodic Review process, and a copy of the letter to Assistant Secretary Malinowski. I hope that the HRC will vote to sign on to this letter and demonstrate its support for federal guidance and support for local implementation of human rights.

If you vote to sign on, the HRC chair may send a signed copy of the letter to me or simply acknowledge in an email to me that the HRC agrees to sign on to this letter. I have also invited Mayor Piercy to sign on, and other mayors and commissions around the country are being invited as well.

Sincerely yours,

Ken Neubeck

Member, State and Local Subcommittee, Human Rights at Home Campaign

cc: Michael Kinnison, Manager, City of Eugene Equity and Human Rights Office

Lorna Flormoe, Staff Member, City of Eugene Equity and Human Rights Office

Andrew Thomson, Chair, Eugene Human Rights Commission

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE U.S. AND HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEWS

### I. TREATY REVIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES

The United States has ratified several major international human rights treaties:

- [The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#), ratified in 1992, protects most traditional civil rights, including voting, speech, and religion;
  - The ICCPR includes protections for basic human rights such as the right to life and to human dignity, freedom of speech and association, freedom from torture and arbitrary detention, fair trial and minority rights. The ICCPR prohibits discrimination and guarantees equality before the law and equality between women and men.
- [The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination \(CERD\)](#), ratified in 1994, protects against racial discrimination.
  - CERD prohibits discrimination in the areas including voting, education, health, housing, property, social security, and employment. It defines discrimination broadly to include laws with “the purpose or effect” of impairing enjoyment of human rights. It also calls on governments to take appropriate measures to review and eliminate laws that create or perpetuate discrimination.
- [The Convention Against Torture \(CAT\)](#), ratified in 1994.
  - The CAT requires measures to end acts of torture and criminalize them. It also calls for governments to prevent acts of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and to investigate allegations of such treatment.
- **Two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of Child, ratified in 2002:**
  - [The Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography](#). This Protocol provides detailed requirements aimed at ending the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, as well as other forms of forced labor and illegal adoption. It further calls for legal and support services for children and international cooperation in efforts to end these abuses
  - [The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict](#). This Protocol aims to limit the participation of those under 18 in recruitment and deployment and to provide basic protections to former child soldiers.

For each treaty, there is a permanent United Nations body of experts charged with monitoring countries’ compliance with human rights obligations in that treaty. Ratifying countries are required to periodically report to these monitoring bodies on their progress in meeting their human rights commitments under the treaty. Civil society also has an opportunity to provide an assessment of compliance with treaty obligations. Ultimately, the treaty body issues Concluding Observations, summarizing concerns and recommendations that the country under review should address.

## ***THE 2014 ICCPR REVIEW***

In March of 2014, the U.S. underwent a formal review of its compliance with the ICCPR. A delegation of U.S. federal agency representatives, as well as a mayor, state attorney general and local human rights agency representative traveled to Geneva to participate in the review and represent the United States. At the conclusion of the review, the U.N. expert Committee [\*issued a number of conclusions and recommendations\*](#) regarding the United States. These Concluding Observations touch on issues of federal, state and local concern, including racial profiling, gun violence, domestic violence, voting and homelessness.

## **II. THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (“UPR”)**

The United Nations Human Rights Council reviews the human rights records of all 193 United Nations Member States once every four years through the [Universal Periodic Review \(“UPR”\) process](#). This peer review process provides an opportunity for each country to discuss what actions it has taken to fulfill its human rights obligations and presents non-governmental organizations with an opportunity to advocate for greater protection or publicize human rights violations. The United States underwent its first UPR review in 2010 and will be reviewed again in 2015.

The 2010 UPR resulted in [228 recommendations](#) for ways in which the United States can improve human rights conditions domestically. Like recommendations from the ICCPR review, many of these recommendations relate to issues within state and local government jurisdiction, including employment, housing and criminal justice. The second review, next year, will focus on U.S. progress in implementing the recommendations from the 2010.

\*\*\*

*For more information on ways that state and local governments can use human rights to advance local policy, visit the website for Columbia Law School’s Human Rights Institute: <http://web.law.columbia.edu/human-rights-institute/human-rights-us/treaty-implementation/state-and-local-work>*

Tom Malinowski  
Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor,  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

July [#], 2014

Dear Assistant Secretary Malinowski,

We write, as representatives of state and local government, to commend the U.S. government on its robust engagement with the U.N Human Rights Committee during its recent review of U.S. compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and to share recommendations on how the federal government can support state and local actors working to promote and protect human rights.

The U.S. government's inclusion of three state and local officials in its delegation for the ICCPR review recognized the important role that state and local officials play in implementing the United States' human rights commitments. State and local participation enriched the conversation during the U.S. consultation with civil society and during the interactive dialogue with the Human Rights Committee, adding a breadth and depth of expertise to the discussions, including on issues of homelessness, domestic violence and LGBT discrimination.

The Human Rights Committee's Concluding Observations reflect that strengthening the U.S. human rights record requires cooperation and collaboration between all levels of government. They highlight numerous gaps between the protections afforded by the ICCPR and the reality in local communities. Addressing these gaps requires broad state and local awareness of human rights principles and their application to subnational entities.

During the interactive dialogue Deputy Assistant Secretary Scott Busby made the laudable commitment to disseminate the Human Rights Committee's Concluding Observation to state and local actors. This commitment is in line with the Human Rights Committee's recommendations to "engage with stakeholders ... to give greater effect to the Covenant" and, "strengthen and expand [federal, state and local] mechanisms mandated to monitor the implementation of human rights...[and] provide them with adequate human and financial resources."<sup>1</sup>

Today, we write to seek your support and guidance so we can do this to the best of our ability.

---

<sup>1</sup> Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: United States of America, para. 4(b);(d), U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/USA/CO/4 (Apr. 23, 2014), *available at* <http://justsecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/UN-ICCPR-Concluding-Observations-USA.pdf>.

An important step towards complying with the U.S. government's commitments and obligations is to widely disseminate treaty body recommendations, communicate how they relate to state and local policy, and provide guidance on practices that can address areas of concern. This type of proactive engagement will educate state and local officials on human rights standards and enhance our capacity to engage in activities that bolster human rights compliance. A number of federal agencies and officials are well-placed to effectively communicate the Committee's recommendations and give them meaning at the state and local level, including agencies with which state and local governments have prior relationships, such as the Department of Justice and others within the Equality Working Group.

We further urge the United States to include a diverse delegation of state and local agencies and officials in all future treaty reviews, including the upcoming reviews of compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and the Convention Against Torture, as well as the Universal Periodic Review process. This will both strengthen the reviews and help to ensure that the resulting recommendations translate into positive domestic practice at the local level.

In 2013, both the IAOHRA – the umbrella organization of state and local human rights agencies with a membership of approximately 160 agencies from across the country – and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, an organization representing cities of 30,000 or more, passed resolutions committing to promote and protect human rights locally. Yet, to implement human rights, the members of these organizations require federal support and guidance.

By taking the steps outlined above, the United States will make important strides towards improving human rights implementation across the country, at every level of government. The federal government should further provide dedicated staff, education, training, and funding to help state, county and municipal governments fully comprehend and engage with the United States' human rights obligations.

We stand ready to work in partnership with the federal government to help the U.S. meet its obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights for all. We look forward to working with you in these efforts and welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations further.

Sincerely,

[SIGN ONs]

cc:

Mary Mcleod, Principal Deputy Legal Adviser, Office of Legal Adviser, U.S.  
Department of State



Scott Busby, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State

David Sullivan, Legal Adviser to U.S. Mission to the United Nations, U.S. Department of State

Kathleen Hooke, Assistant Legal Advisor for Human Rights and Refugees, Office of the Legal Advisor, U.S. Department of State

Dean Pittman, Assistant Secretary, International Organization Affairs, Department of State

Jesse Tampio, Attorney-Adviser, Office of Human Rights & Refugees, U.S. Department of State

Sue Biniarz, Deputy Legal Adviser, Office of the Legal Adviser

Karen Stevens, Senior Counsel, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice